

The Kentucky Gazette

FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY — FEBRUARY,
1861

KENTUCKY LEGISLATURE ACTS UPON THE CRITTENDEN AMENDMENTS

The Kentucky General Assembly convened this past week in one of the most consequential sessions in the memory of this Commonwealth. The chamber debated and voted upon the six amendments to the Constitution of the United States proposed by our own Senator, John J. Crittenden.

The session opened with notable announcements. Word arrived that the Crittenden Compromise, having been killed in Congress at Washington, are now to be taken up at a special Peace Conference to be convened in the Federal City. Kentucky's own James Guthrie is to chair the drafting committee.

ON THE QUESTION OF SECESSION

The first resolution addressed the gravest question now facing our Republic. After vigorous debate, the Legislature passed by a vote of nineteen to ten, with the Governor casting the deciding vote in the affirmative. The resolution recognizing South Carolina's right, and by extension all states, to secede from the Union as secured by the Constitution. However, Kentucky disagrees with the exercise of that right in the present circumstances.

VOTES UPON THE SIX AMENDMENTS

I	Missouri Compromise line restored	15-11	Passed
II	Slavery on Federal property in slave states	20-7	Passed
III	Slavery conditions in D.C.	9-many	Failed
IV	Protection of the internal slave trade	many-few	Passed
V	Federal liability for fugitive slaves	5-many	Failed
VI	Irrevocability of slavery protections	4-many	Failed

AN ACT FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE JACKSON PURCHASE

An act was introduced providing for appropriation of state treasury funds toward the erection of defensive works along the Mississippi River within the Jackson Purchase. The matter awaits further deliberation by the full Assembly.

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FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

The Peace Conference now convening in Washington draws delegates from across the border states. Kentucky is represented by James Guthrie and William O. Butler, men of distinction and experience. The prospect of settlement dims by the day, yet we must not abandon hope while statesmen still labor.

EDITORIAL

It is the conviction of this journal that Kenneth Tuckerson, Speaker of the Kentucky House, spoke with wisdom and conscience in his address upon the Crittenden Amendments. The Speaker affirmed his support for the amendments as the last and best chance to avert the calamity of war, reminding his colleagues of Senator Webster’s warning that there is no such thing as peaceable secession.

“Of all the things we have debated for the good of Kentucky’s people, it is imperative that we align on this: we cannot let war befall our country and our state.”

The Speaker appealed to the tradition of compromise, quoting the late Henry Clay on mutual concession, that a compromise is a work of mutual sacrifice for the sake of peace. He acknowledged that neither side finds these amendments fully satisfying. That, in truth, is the mark of a genuine compromise. We believe Kentucky stands in a singular position. It is placed geographically between the contending sections and blessed with a legislature of diverse views, we are the natural mediators of this national quarrel.

— Nathan Jones, Editor

FROM THE CHARLESTON COURIER CHARLESTON, MISSOURI — FEBRUARY, 1861	FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD PREAMBLE OF THE CRITTENDEN AMENDMENTS, DEC. 18, 1860	FROM THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT DAVIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT DAVIS, FEB. 18, 1861
Charleston Courier, February 1861 Men at Washington think there is no chance for peace, and indeed we can see but little, everything looks gloomy. The Crittenden resolutions have been voted down again and again. Is there any other proposition which will win, that the South can accept? If not, there comes war, and woe to the wives and daughters of our land; beauty will be but an incentive to crime, and plunder but pay for John Brown raids. Let our citizens be prepared for the worst, it may come. — Geo. Whitcomb, Editor	U.S. Senate, December 18, 1860 Whereas, serious and alarming dissensions have arisen between the Northern and Southern States, concerning the rights and security of the rights of the slaveholding States, and especially their rights in the common territory of the United States; and whereas it is eminently desirable and proper that these dissensions, which now threaten the very existence of this Union, should be permanently quieted and settled by constitutional provisions, which shall do equal justice to all sections, and thereby restore to the	Alabama Capitol, Montgomery, February 18, 1861 Our present condition, achieved in a manner unprecedented in the history of nations, illustrates the American idea that governments rest upon the consent of the governed, and that it is the right of the people to alter or abolish governments whenever they become destructive of the ends for which they were established. The declared purpose of the compact of Union from which we have withdrawn was to establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the

We share our Missouri

colleague’s anxious spirit, though not his despair. The Peace Conference may yet arrive at terms both sections can accept. Let us not sound the alarm before diplomats have exhausted their art.

people that peace and good will which ought to prevail between all the citizens of the United States... — Sen. John J. Crittenden of Kentucky

These words, penned by Kentucky’s own Senator Crittenden, capture the gravity of the hour. This journal urges our Assemblymen to weigh his proposal with the seriousness it deserves.

blessing of liberty to ourselves and our posterity... — Jefferson Davis, President, Confederate States of America

These words, spoken by Jefferson Davis upon his inauguration as President of the Confederate States, give full expression to the Southern argument for separation. This journal presents them that our readers may judge for themselves the justice of that cause.